9/27/67

Dear Sylvia,

Glad you are getting better. I have slowed down to the point that I sleep sometimes as much as 5½ hours. There is too much to do and I feel it should all have been done before this.

My Lane information is from Hal Verb, who saw him end August. Book supposedly on press and this subject. An honest job on that could be important. I've been asked to do it but cannot. ...Lane is looking for publicity. On this aspect, where his public position is otherwise, he can get it only from the glow....Your comments on the N.G. are really understatements. The only reason I got any mention there at all is because they had to listen to Belfrage then. His daughter sent him a copy of my book. The N.G. did not answer a letter I wrote them, as Armoni and other, before printing. You could add to your comment on Lane how ostentaciously he omits that particular footnote. I wonder if this incident is not typical of the man, whose other character defects we all have to live with? Maggies comment reminds me of what I have long felt: with Epstein not part of our "group", aside from Lane, who is there who causes "schisms"? Are all of us to accept his various abuses in silence to avoid "schisms"? I rather think the rest of us cooperate rather well. Perhaps you explain her silence, which I had attributed to her preoccupation with her book. I plan a trip out there for, among other things, a real effort to beard Liebeler and Ball, for whom I'm loaded. She has been silent. I asked for the name of her book so I could include a reference to it in the one I've just finished drafting and she hasn't responded. Nor has Steve Burton. I also wonder if they are put out at my attitude toward the CBS thing. I sent them copies of the long commentary I prepared as a first step to doing something, asking her and their comment prior to doing anything with it and the reply has been silent from them and Bill. I have consulted counsel and my position appears to be different because there seems to be a prima facie case of actual plagiarism and a viable question of what the lawyers call "contract" in that I had proposed to them what they did (save for doctrine) and, they said they wouldn't do it. Therefore, I made what I did personal. I believe I didn't send you a copy because you were so busy and it is 75 pages long without introduction or conclusion. This attitude toward him can be most hurtful to those who hold it. I had to decline a Playboy offer to clobber him for what he did to me in their interview when they learned it and phoned me, for "us", not for him. There will be no end to these things and I regard as the most serious extant threat what he said in New Orleans. I was with Richard Townley when Lane told us the LA bar group he addressed that day had enjoined him in writing from comment on the N.O. case-and he a lawyer! I think perhaps you know a little of my feeling when there is total silence about the things he did to me when, as with the Playboy piece and the Zapruder film, there was such silence from all.

I do not believe, as you imply, that Garrison believes or has said that Oswald was a member of a conspiracy to kill Kennedy. I think he believes otherwise, although I also think he believes all the Oswalds who have appeared may be the real one. Or did before I went down. I wish you could see all of my stuff on this, independent of Garrison's as it is. I heard from the Times of London, which read the ms, just yesterday. They found it "very persuasive". My great fear is that the case will be thrown out of court or that parts of it will be because of what has happened.

I did not respond to the Playboy letter for different reasons. We have been in touch since before they did the Lane interview. I think it will do no good to tell them I do not reuse the condoms of others, and what else can I say?

Your own strong feelings are very clear. However, I really do not think it is right to call Maggie unprincipled, and I do not think she is. Aside from Lane, where there is an old personal relationship and perhaps the justified feeling that he alone raised his voice at the beginning, regardless of motive and whether or not he was responsible -and for that I believe he deserves credit and I always seek to give it to him- what is between you andher and you and others is really your attitude toward Garrison. As I tried to tell you, I believe you should let history not passion write the answer. None of us knows what he really has or doesn't have. I know what I have and I have tried to assure you that I sincerely believe it is enough to establish in the minds of reasonable men the fact that he is on the right track. Suppose it turns out that you have been wrong because there is so much of it that you do not know? I encourage you not to break a long friendship that had to have a strong basis to exist.

This sort of thing can be very hurtful to all of us. I am perhaps more acutely aware of it because of the financial crises with which it helps confront me daily. Right now I wonder if printing POST MORTEM, which I regard as very important, is something I can afford to do. I am going ahead with it, but I have seen no support at all for its predecessor, which I have also been told is important, though I recall no west-coast comment and I got no response when I asked if the bookstores out there could be checked.

But remember that you could, without hurt to you conscience, cooperate with the doctrine of the Epstein book. Aside from the personal feeling, can you not as easily have a similar attitude toward Maggie?

Those of us who take a serious attitude toward this should not fraction ourselves. Fortunately, Lane is the only whore (I do not say "among us"). There must be differences of opinion between independent people who have their own attitudes and beliefs. I think in your distress you may have escalated this, and I encourage you to consider, dispassionately, whether it is possible.

There are those about whom I think I have reason for question. About them I remain silence. Therefore, I have asked you and Maggie to make no mention of what I have sent you two alone. This is not the same, however, as fighting -or hating.

The situation is not good. There are too many people from whom I have not heard in too long a time, even after I have written. From this I take it that they disapprove of things I have done or said or have picques of which I am not conscious. I must leave it that way, knowing I have intended nothing that could justify this. I hope it can be kept to a minimum and to the degree compatible with good conscience, subliminated. However, I am troubled by it.Before I plan for the westcoast trip, I'll write Bill again. I have no knowledge of the pub date of Oswald in New Orleans. It will be about two weeks after that.

Yesterday I finally heard from Penn. They have troubles, too. I had referred a magazine to him, feeling a story in the "mysterious deaths" should be hims. He has signed a contract with Award, and Award has Turner doing a book on Garrison....Just got a call from the painter who is to do some touching up at our new home and I must get there to let him in....We'll soon move our bodies then drag the rest. I'll let you know when. We'll have private space for visitors then. I put it this way because it will be some time before we can afford to furnish it decently. Chin up!

Best regards,